

The Kosciuszko Foundation Celebrates 100 Years with a Centennial Ball at the Plaza

An Institution Championed by Einstein, Martha Stewart, Madame Curie, and Pope John Paul II

NEW YORK CITY, DC, UNITED STATES, April 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Kosciuszko Foundation](#) (KF), a venerable Upper East Side institution that has distributed tens of millions of dollars in scholarships, research grants, and funded events to promote Polish culture, is holding “the [Ball of the Century](#)” at the Plaza at the foot of Central Park on Saturday, April 26, at 7 p.m.



Polish American Folk Dance company performs in the Grand Ballroom of the Plaza during the Kosciuszko Foundation's Annual Ball.

The Foundation owns the nearby Van Alen mansion at 15 East 65th Street, which was built in 1917 for James John Van Alen, a socialite known as “the American Prince of Wales.” The playboy sold the stately residence and moved to England during prohibition. It became a cornerstone of Polish-American society with a museum of priceless European artwork. From headquarters, the Kosciuszko Foundation has raised funds for scholars and hosted concerts and symposiums on freedom during the Cold War and the Solidarity revolution, which toppled Soviet Communism and turned Poland into one of the largest economies in Europe.

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The Foundation’s work proves that culture shapes identity—and in the end, it creates the nation itself.”

Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (later Pope John Paul II)

Named after the Revolutionary War General Tadeusz Kosciuszko (you know, like the bridge), the Foundation was the brainchild of an audacious farm boy from Rakszawa, Poland, named Stephen Mizwa. In 1910, at 17, Mizwa left the milk cows in his family’s pasture and set sail for the United States with \$25 in his pocket. He boarded a steamship, the SS Princess Irene, and slept on a bunk of old straw in steerage. Weeks later, he disembarked at Ellis Island and headed for Northampton, Massachusetts, where Polish immigrants helped him find work making wooden boxes, peeling potatoes, and washing dishes

while studying at night. These Poles guided him through Amherst College and Harvard University. When Mizwa became an economist and a professor, he paid forward the favor by establishing a Foundation in 1925 to educate future generations.

Over the years, the Foundation has become a bridge between Poland and the United States. It has grown to include eleven chapters across America and an office in Warsaw, Poland. In 2010, the Foundation was given a building in Washington D.C. on O Street, near Dupont Circle, providing a foothold in our nation's capital. This led to a conference about the Katyn Massacre at the Library of Congress and an exhibit about Polish history that went on display in the U.S. Senate's Russell office building.

In addition to raising money for scholarships and scientific research, the Kosciuszko Foundation operates exchange programs, a Chopin piano competition, a Polish film festival, jazz concerts, restoration of historic archives, preservation of artwork, the Teaching English in Poland program, relief efforts for Ukrainian war refugees fleeing Russian bombs, and other programs that evolve with the important events of our day.

Kosciuszko Foundation President Marek Skulimowski, an experienced businessman and diplomat, has become known as the Polish Indiana Jones because of his success in tracking down artwork and a 500-year-old bible stolen by Nazi Germany and restoring it to its rightful owners.

Among those who have come to support Kosciuszko Foundation and its efforts are Polish Nobel Prize-winning scientists Maria-Sklodowska-Curie, Martha Stewart, Duke's "Coach K" Mike Krzyzewski, Albert Einstein, McDonald's CEO Chris Kempczinski, Nobel Prize-winning physicist Frank Wilczek, Zbigniew Brzezinski, U.S. Senators, Polish rock stars and movie directors, and many more. Before he became Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla came to our headquarters and said: "The work of the Foundation is particularly important at this time. We realize that culture creates a national identity, and in the end, creates the nation itself."

To learn more about the Kosciuszko Foundation, log on to: <https://thekf.org>

To [Donate](https://thekf.org/about-us/ways-to-give/): <https://thekf.org/about-us/ways-to-give/>

To schedule an interview with:

President and Executive Director, Marek Skulimowski,

or Chairman of the Board, Alex Storozyński,

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